

INFORMATION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

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SUMMER

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INFORMATION
FOR
SOCIAL CHANGE

Information for Social Change

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Information for Social Change is an activist organisation that examines issues of censorship, freedom and ethics amongst library and information workers. It is committed to promoting alternatives to the dominant paradigms of library and information work and publishes its own journal, *Information for Social Change*.

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COPIES OF PREVIOUS ISSUES OF ISC ARE TO BE FOUND UPON OUR

WEBSITE :

[HTTP://LIBR.ORG/ISC/](http://libr.org/isc/)

Information for Social Change is an Organisation in Liaison with the Library Association.

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Picture:
One of our editorial team while searching for copy to include in this issue.

NOT SO MUCH AN EDITORIAL

-
MORE A SET OF IDEAS.

OR

A FEW NOTES FOR THIS ISSUE.

**YOU MIGHT OF NOTICED A FEW CHANGES OF STYLE WITHIN THIS ISSUE
OF ISC.**

**IN PUTTING THIS EDITION TOGETHER I HAVE ATTEMPTED TO PLAY WITH
VARIOUS IDEAS ABOUT THE VISUAL PRESENTATION OF INFORMATION,
WHILE MAKING A MUCH MORE THEMATIC PRESENTATION OF IDEAS THAN
HAS EVER BEEN DONE WITHIN PREVIOUS ISSUES OF ISC.**

THIS ISSUE OF ISC IS INTENDED TO GIVE YOU:

- SOME UPDATES,
- SOME INTERNATIONAL NEWS,
- &
- SOME INFORMATION ABOUT RADICAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION.

**IN BETWEEN PUTTING THIS EDITION TOGETHER I HAVE BEEN CHANGING
HOME.**

MY NEW HOME IS WITHIN 100 METRES OF ONE OF THE

Nukiller waste train routes.

**SO I GUESS THAT I'LL BE PUTTING SOME MORE TIME INTO ANTH-NUKE
WORK DURING THE COMING FEW YEARS.**

**I MENTION THIS AS IT APTLY ILLUSTRATES THAT MANY OF THOSE ISSUES
WHICH PEOPLE MIGHT VIEW AS 'POLITICAL',
ARE IN REALITY ABOUT HOW WE LIVE OUR LIVES,
AND ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT.**

**AS WITH EVERY ISSUE OF ISC -
THERE IS A CHANGE OF EDITOR.**

I HOPE THAT YOU LIKE WHAT THIS EDITOR HAS DONE.

WELL - ALL IS CHANGE.

MARTYN LOWE

JULY 2001

Anarchism 2001

The 20th Annual Anarchist Bookfair

Saturday October 20th

10.00 - 19.00.

The very first Anarchist Bookfair was in 1981.

' This year's Anarchist Bookfair is bigger. Because we've been so crushed into Conway Hall for the last few years, we've moved to a bigger hall: the Camden Centre. At the back of Camden Town Hall (opposite St Pancras Station) this time you'll have some space to see the books, stalls, videos and crèche. The Bookfair is 100 metres from King's Cross tube.'

Camden Centre, Town Hall, Judd Street, London WC1.

For more information contact:

MAIL@ANARCHISTBOOKFAIR.ORG

or See:

HTTP://FREESPACE.VIRGIN.NET/ANARCHIST.BOOKFAIR/



Cartoon : Donald Room - 1st Published in FREEDOM - Aug' 15th 1998

GLENN RIKOWSKI,

THE BATTLE IN SEATTLE - ITS SIGNIFICANCE FOR EDUCATION

TUFNELL PRESS,

47 DALMENY ROAD, LONDON, N7 ODY,

2001

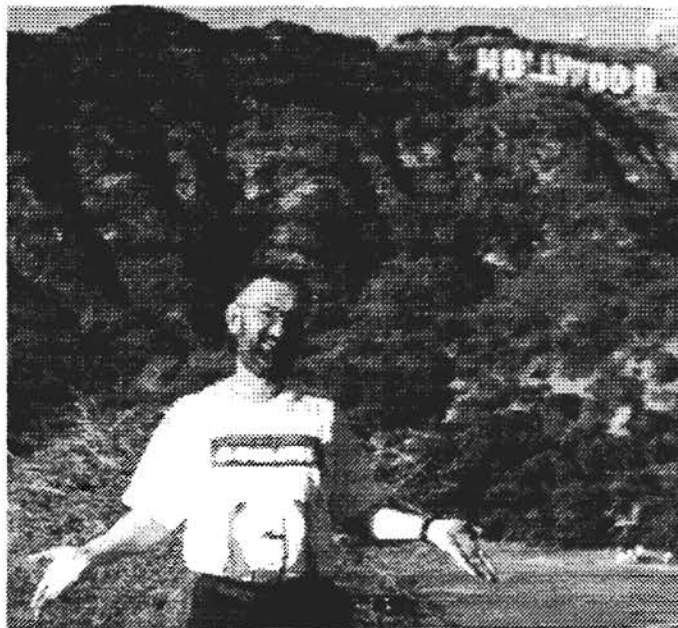
ISBN 1 872767 370

"PRIVATELY MANAGED STATE SCHOOL CHAIN LAUNCHED. BRITAIN'S FIRST FEDERATION OF PRIVATELY-MANAGED STATE SCHOOLS WAS OFFICIALLY LAUNCHED THIS WEEK CLAIMING IT WILL USE THE LATEST TECHNOLOGY TO BEAT TEACHER SHORTAGES...THE GOVERNMENT'S NATIONAL PLAN FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS UNVEILED LAST MONTH SHOWED 3ES (3 E ENTERPRISES) INFLUENCED MINISTERS' THINKING ON THE FUTURE OF COMPREHENSIVES. IN THE GREEN PAPER, IT SAID IT WOULD ENABLE PRIVATE, VOLUNTARY OR SUCCESSFUL STATE SCHOOLS IN A WAY THAT WOULD "FURTHER DEVELOP THE MODEL" PUT FORWARD BY 3ES" (LOCAL GOVERNMENT FIRST, 17 MARCH 2001) THE PRIVATISATION OF BRITAIN'S SCHOOLS HAS BEGUN. THE TAKEOVER OF "FAILING LEAs" BY PRIVATE COMPANIES IS MAKING WAY FOR THE WHOLESALE TAKEOVER OF THE EDUCATION SERVICE BY 3 ES AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS WHICH WILL HELP NEW LABOUR TO DISMANTLE THE COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM. THIS IS PART OF A BIGGER PROCESS - GLOBALISATION - WHICH WILL AFFECT EVERY ASPECT OF OUR LIVES, IF THE WTO GETS ITS WAY. BUT, AS "THE BATTLE IN SEATTLE" POINTS OUT, THERE IS A WELL ORGANISED ANTI-CAPITALIST MOVEMENT WHICH WILL FIGHT THEM EVERY INCH OF THE WAY. THIS BOOK - WHICH SPANS FROM "THE MORNING AFTER PRAGUE (SEP 2000) TO "POST-NICE POSTSCRIPT" (DEC 2000) - APPLIES A MARXIST ANALYSIS TO GLOBALISATION AND EXAMINES THE IMPACT OF THIS NEW STAGE OF IMPERIALISM ON EDUCATION. THE WTO IS ATTEMPTING TO GREATLY EXTEND THE REMIT OF THE OLD GATT TO COVER ISSUES SUCH AS TRADE RELATED INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY MEASURES, AND AGREEMENTS ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS. AS A RESULT, THE BATTLE FOR SEATTLE WAS NOT ONLY SIGNIFICANT FOR EDUCATION - IT ALSO HAS MAJOR IMPLICATIONS FOR THE MASS MEDIA, COMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRIES, THE INTERNET AND INFORMATION WORKERS. THE WTO HAS RECOGNISED THE GROWING IMPORTANCE OF THE "KNOWLEDGE STRUCTURE" (KNOWLEDGE HAS BECOME A SIGNIFICANT FACTOR OF PRODUCTION) AND THERE IS AN EMPHASIS ON KNOWLEDGE-BASED INDUSTRIES (WHICH INCLUDES SCHOOLS, LIBRARIES, ICT, ETC). WHILE GLOBAL MEDIA CORPORATIONS ARE BECOMING HOMOGENISED, THERE IS A PARALLEL MOVE TO PRIVATISE EDUCATION AND COMMERCIALISE INFORMATION. THE EDUCATION GREEN PAPER MARKS A SHARP SHIFT AWAY FROM THE COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM AND TOWARDS INCREASED SPECIALISATION. THIS SHIFT IS BEING AIDED BY THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM AND THE GROWTH OF PRIVATE SECTOR EDUCATION CONSULTANCIES. EDUCATION IS SIGNIFICANT FOR ANTI-CAPITALISM BECAUSE EDUCATION, AS A COMMODITY, IS CRUCIAL TO THE CAPITALISATION OF PEOPLE. IN NEW LABOUR SPEAK, THE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY HAS REPLACED MANUFACTURING AND WORKFARE HAS TAKEN OVER FROM WELFARE. THE "BUSINESSIFICATION" OF SCHOOLING WILL REDUCE TEACHER RESISTANCE TO THESE CHANGES AND WILL PRODUCE WORKERS WHO ARE ABLE TO HELP THE UK COMPETE IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY. WORKERS WILL BE EDUCATED AND TRAINED TO MAINTAIN CAPITALISM - THEY WILL BECOME AGENTS IN THEIR OWN OPPRESSION. TO PREVENT THIS HAPPENING ANOTHER SOCIAL UNIVERSE MUST BE CREATED -SOCIALISM, BASED ON ADDRESSING HUMAN NEED. WE CAN LOOK, FOR EXAMPLE, TO CUBA WHERE A SOCIALIST EDUCATION SYSTEM HAS PLAYED A CRUCIAL ROLE IN BUILDING SOCIAL JUSTICE, EQUALITY AND SOLIDARITY FOR PROGRESSIVE SOCIAL CHANGE. NEO-LIBERALISM HAS BOTH A

BOOK REVIEW

NATIONAL AND AN INTERNATIONAL FOCUS. IT NEEDS TO BE COUNTERED ON BOTH THESE FRONTS. NATIONALLY, THERE ARE STRUGGLES GOING ON ALL OVER THE WORLD, INCLUDING THE LANDLESS PEASANTS MOVEMENT IN BRAZIL, MEXICO'S ZAPATISTAS, AND THE CARNIVAL AGAINST CAPITALISM IN LONDON. INTERNATIONALLY, WHEREVER THE WORLD CAPITALIST MOVEMENT MEETS, IT CAN NOW EXPECT TO MEET RESISTANCE FROM WORKERS, WHO USE THE INTERNET TO ORGANISE ACROSS BORDERS, AND THEN JOIN UP IN A FORCEFUL SHOW OF DIRECT ACTION. THE LATEST MANIFESTATION OF THIS ("ACTIVISTS CLASH WITH POLICE AT NAPLES FORUM", MORNING STAR, 17 MARCH 2001) TOOK PLACE AT THE THIRD GLOBAL FORUM MEETING ON GOVERNANCE IN NAPLES. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SEATTLE WAS THE SCALE AND THE DEGREE OF ORGANISATION OF THIS RESISTANCE, ALTHOUGH THERE ARE DEBATES AS TO WHETHER THE PROTESTS WERE ANTI CAPITALIST OR PRO SOCIALIST (AMONG OTHER ALTERNATIVES TO CAPITALISM). THE QUESTION, AFTER SEATTLE, IS "WHAT NEXT ?", AND THE AUTHOR SUGGESTS THE NEED FOR A NEW VISION, PRINCIPLES, POLICIES, AND ORGANISATION. IN TERMS OF THE STRUGGLE WITHIN EDUCATION, THERE IS A NEED FOR CRITICAL PEDAGOGY (FOR MORE ON THIS SEE OTHER WORKS BY THE HILLCOLE GROUP OF RADICAL LEFT EDUCATORS). THIS BOOK PROVIDES A VERY USEFUL MARXIST ANALYSIS OF THE PAST AND GIVES HOPE FOR A FUTURE WHERE HUMANITY IS NOT DOMINATED BY CAPITAL.

JOHN PATEMAN



Picture :

Still looking for material to include in this issue.

Corporate Watch

Corporate Watch is a radical research and publishing group, based in Oxford, UK.

It was set up in late 1996 to support activism against large corporations, particularly multinationals.

The magazine 'Corporate Watch' was published every 3 months, and presented a critical, though light-hearted, challenge to corporate dominance – informing activists and potential activists in the issues, and providing information for campaigns and campaigners. The magazine has now changed format, and is replaced by a regular newsletter 'Corporate Watch' and great resources upon its website

For more information Contact:

Corporate Watch,

16b Cherwell St. Oxford OX4 1BG. U.K.

Tel. +44(0)1865 791 391.

www.corporatewatch.org.uk

mail@corporatewatch.org



GREEN ANARCHIST

GREEN ANARCHIST MAGAZINE
has just folded with Issue # 62.

Anyone who wishes to find out more about the complex reasons for this closure should contact:

Stephen Booth,
editor of GA # 62

9 Ash Avenue, Galgate,
Lancaster, LA2 0NP

tel: 01524-752212

email: grandlaf@lineone.net

THE REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER FOR CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE (REC)

[HTTP://WWW.REC.ORG/DEFAULT.SHTML](http://www.rec.org/default.shtml)

THIS IS A WEBSITE WITH LOTS OF GOOD INFORMATION UPON IT !

' THE REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER FOR CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE (REC) IS A NON-ADVOCACY, NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANISATION WITH A MISSION TO ASSIST IN SOLVING ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE (CEE). THE CENTER FULFILS ITS MISSION THROUGH ENCOURAGING COOPERATION AMONG NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS, GOVERNMENTS AND BUSINESSES, SUPPORTING THE FREE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND PROMOTING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN ENVIRONMENTAL DECISION-MAKING.

THE REC WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1990 BY THE UNITED STATES, THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION AND HUNGARY. TODAY, THE REC IS LEGALLY BASED ON A CHARTER SIGNED BY THE GOVERNMENTS OF 25 COUNTRIES AND THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION, AND ON AN INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF HUNGARY.

THE REC HAS ITS HEAD OFFICE IN SZENTENDRE, HUNGARY AND COUNTRY OFFICES IN EACH OF ITS 15 BENEFICIARY CEE COUNTRIES, WHICH ARE: ALBANIA, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, BULGARIA, CROATIA, CZECH REPUBLIC, ESTONIA, HUNGARY, LATVIA, LITHUANIA, FYR MACEDONIA, POLAND, ROMANIA, SLOVAKIA, SLOVENIA AND YUGOSLAVIA.'

REC PRODUCE MANY VERY USEFUL PUBLICATIONS,

WHICH INCLUDE:

THE BULLETIN: THE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE OF THE REC.

GOVERNMENT AND ENVIRONMENT: A DIRECTORY OF GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS WITH ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE .

GUIDE TO IMPLEMENTING LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PROGRAMS IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

&

MEDIA SOURCE DIRECTORY: A JOURNALIST'S GUIDE TO ENVIRONMENTAL CONTACTS IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

**REC'S HEAD OFFICE
2000 SZENTENDRE
ADY ENDRE ÚT 9-11
HUNGARY**

TEL: (36-26) 504-000

FAX: (36-26) 311-294

E-MAIL: INFO@REC.ORG

Peace Brigades International (PBI)

PBI is a grassroots organization that explores and promotes nonviolent peacekeeping and support for human rights.

When invited, it sends teams of volunteers into areas of political repression and conflict. The volunteers accompany human rights defenders, their organizations, and others threatened by political violence.

PBI wins Martin Ennals Award for human rights defenders

More than 100 people including representatives from national and international NGOs and the UN attended a ceremony in Geneva on 29 March when PBI was presented with the 2001 Martin Ennals Award. The Award has been presented annually since 1993 to individuals and organisations who 'have displayed exceptional courage and innovation in combatting human rights violations.' The Foundation responsible for the Award is made up of nine of the world's leading human rights organisations including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the World Organisation against Torture.

The Award recognises PBI's work in promoting nonviolence and human rights for the past twenty years and in particular for the work of PBI's 35 volunteers in Colombia.

In addition to this Award PBI has also been nominated for the Nobel Peace prize by the American Friends Service Committee.

Peace Brigades International, International Office
5 Caledonian Rd, London N1 9DX, UK
Tel: 44-(0)20-7713-0392
FAX: 44-(0)20-7837-2290
EMAIL: PBIIO@GN.APC.ORG
WEB: WWW.PEACEBRIGADES.ORG



WEBPAGE NEWS

Bibliotek i Samhälle (BIS)

"Libraries in Society".

BIS is a politically independent organisation working on a socialist basis to promote progressive librarianship.

BIS have just revised their Webpage information in English.

[HTTP://WWW.BOK-FORM.SE/BIS/BIS_ENGLISH/5_1_PROGRAM.HTM](http://www.bok-form.se/bis/bis_english/5_1_program.htm)

Schnews

is perhaps one of best sources of Alternative news that one can read.

The new SchNEWS annual is out -

'SchNEWS & SQUALL's Yearbook 2001'

It is a 300 page annual which features full reprints of SchNEWS 251-300, many articles and pictures from SQUALL, plus more articles, news, pictures, and satirical material about the events of the period March 2000 - April 2001.

"The Zapatistas march into Mexico City, thousands disrupt the World Bank meeting in Prague, Churchill gets and anarchist makeover: from Bognor to Bogota, Dudley to Delhi, and Kilburn to Melbourne, resistance has become as global as the institutions of capitalism.

It's all here. Featuring SchNEWS 251-300, the best of Squall, plus article from people at the frontline of struggles worldwide, and creating sustainable solutions to the corporate carve-up of the planet. All wrapped up with loadsa photos, cartoons, satirical graphics, subverts, and a comprehensive contacts database."

It is available shops for £7 or £8.50 (inc. p&p) from SchNEWS .

ISBN 09529748 4 3

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STATEWATCH

STATEWATCH IS A NON-PROFIT-MAKING VOLUNTARY GROUP FOUNDED IN 1991. IT IS COMPRISED OF LAWYERS, ACADEMICS, JOURNALISTS, RESEARCHERS AND COMMUNITY ACTIVISTS. ITS EUROPEAN NETWORK OF CONTRIBUTORS IS DRAWN FROM 12 COUNTRIES. STATEWATCH ENCOURAGES THE PUBLICATION OF INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM AND CRITICAL RESEARCH IN THE FIELDS OF THE STATE, CIVIL LIBERTIES AND OPENNESS.

THE STATEWATCH BULLETIN WAS LAUNCHED IN 1991 AND IS NOW IN ITS 11TH YEAR OF PUBLICATION. COVERAGE INCLUDES NEWS, FEATURES AND RESEARCH SOURCES ON NEW MEASURES INTRODUCED BY NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS AND THE EU INSTITUTIONS IN BRUSSELS AS WELL AS REPORTING FROM THE GROUND ON THE EFFECT OF POLICIES AND STATE PRACTICES IN THE COMMUNITY.

THE STATEWATCH WEBSITE WAS LAUNCHED IN AUGUST 1995, FROM THE OUTSET IT INCLUDED A FREE, SEARCHABLE DATABASE. IT NOW HOLDS 26,000 ITEMS INCLUDING COVERAGE FROM THE BULLETIN.

IN 1997 THE STATEWATCH EUROPEAN MONITORING AND DOCUMENTATION CENTRE (SEMDOC) WAS LAUNCHED. SEMDOC HAS AN EXTENSIVE COLLECTION DOCUMENTS FROM THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION, THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION AND THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ON JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS AND CIVIL LIBERTIES. THE SEMDOC WEBSITE WAS LAUNCHED IN 1998 TOGETHER WITH THE STATEWATCH EUROPEAN MONITOR.

IN JUNE 2000 STATEWATCH NEWS ONLINE WAS LAUNCHED AND CARRIES NEWS AND FEATURES WITH EXTENSIVE FULL-TEXT BACKGROUND DOCUMENTATION TO SUPPLEMENT COVERAGE IN THE BULLETIN. IN JANUARY 2001 THE STATEWATCH SUBSCRIBER WEBSITE WAS LAUNCHED WHICH IS ACCESSIBLE THROUGH AN ONLINE SUBSCRIPTION TO BULLETIN SUBSCRIBERS - IT CARRIES THE CURRENT BULLETIN IN "PDF" FORMAT AND A DATABASE OF ALL COVERAGE IN THE BULLETIN FROM 1991 TO THE CURRENT ISSUE.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE STATEWACH DATABASE AND BULLETIN ARE WELCOMED:

OFFICE@STATEWATCH.ORG

STATEWATCH,
PO BOX 1516,
LONDON N16 0EW, UK

TEL: + 44 (0)208 802 1882

FAX: + 44 (0)208 880 1727

[HTTP://WWW.STATEWATCH.ORG/](http://WWW.STATEWATCH.ORG/)

Some Recent Developments

The Diversity Council launched

An historic event took place in London on March 14th, 2001 when, under the guidance of Prof. Ismail Abdullahi, a number of organisations came together to form the Diversity Council. The three organisations that form the Diversity Council are African Caribbean Library Association (ACLA), the Asian Librarians and Advisers Group (ALAG), and Race and Class Group (RCG). The Chinese Library Support Group, the Specialist Provision in Community Languages and English Group (SPICE) and the Vietnamese Library Support Network have since joined the Council.

The Council aims to become a group of the LA, and is calling on members to sign a letter asking the LA to recognise it as such. The Diversity Council is launching its newsletter *Diversity*.

More details from Shiraz Durrani: shiraz.durrani@merton.gov.uk

Quality Leaders Project for Black Library & Information Workers

The QLP which is supported by *re:source*, ALCL and the Library Association is now ready to implement its two pilot plans. At a meeting in April, the advisory group approved the proposals from Quality Leaders from Birmingham and Merton. Both pilots aim to improve public library services while developing black managers. The Management Research Centre, University of North London, which carried out the initial feasibility study, is carrying out training and evaluation. It will release its latest findings at the Black Contribution Conference at UmbrellA on 6 July. A newsletter will be produced for QLP by the Social Exclusion Action Planning Network.

LA's Policy Advisory Group on Social Inclusion

The Library Association has recently established three Policy Group on Social Inclusion (PAGs) - on social inclusion, regionalism and devolution, and on a national information policy. Future PAGs are likely to include health, and competitiveness and the knowledge economy.

The PAGs have been set up to deal with the important cross-cutting policy issues. PAGs are meant to provide a fresh look at these policy areas. They involve leading members of the profession with an expertise in the subject area concerned.

TUC's *Black workers deserve better*

The TUC black workers conference was held in Perth at the end of April 2001 and discussed the worsening position faced by black workers in Britain. The TUC Report, *Black workers deserve better* was released at the Conference.

Merton ReachOut

Merton Libraries has issued the first issue of a new quarterly newsletter about outreach services. The first issue contains articles from various communities, articles by library staff giving some details of the outreach services. Full details about community outreach projects will be included in the forth-coming *Community Outreach Projects Handbook*. Copies available from Di Reynolds, BME/Outreach services, bme.outreach@merton.gov.uk.

New publications

- House of Commons (Session 1999-2000), Culture, Media and Sports Committee, Sixth Report. (a) *Public Libraries*; (b) Third Special Report (May 2001) Government Response.
- Race relations (Amendment) Act 2000; new laws for a successful multi-racial Britain; proposals for implementation. (2001) Home Office Communications Directorate.
- *Libraries, Museums, Galleries and Archives for All: Co-operating across the sectors to tackle social exclusion*. (2001) London, DCMS

LIBRARIANS PROTEST MURDER OF PROTESTOR IN GENOA!**OPEN LETTER FROM LIBRARIANS
AGAINST THE MURDER OF PEOPLE EXERCISING THE RIGHT TO
PROTEST AGAINST CORPORATE GLOBALIZATION AT THE
GENOA CONFERENCE, JULY 2001**

THE UNDERSIGNED LIBRARIANS, LIBRARY EMPLOYEES, LIBRARY PROFESSORS & TEACHERS OF LIBRARY & INFORMATION SCIENCES, INFORMATION PROFESSIONALS, PARAPROFESSIONALS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS, WISH TO EXPRESS THEIR HORROR AT THE ESCALATING ANTI-CIVILIAN MILITARY MOBILIZATIONS AND THE PLANNED AND ENTIRELY DISPROPORTIONATE VIOLENCE EXERCISED AGAINST FUNDAMENTALLY PEACEFUL, CERTAINLY UNARMED, PROTESTS OF THE MEETINGS OF THE G7+, THE WTO, THE IMF/WORLD BANK AND ALL OTHER GATHERINGS OF THE PROPONENTS AND AGENCIES OF A TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATE WORLD ORDER.

WE REJECT (AND HOLD RESPONSIBLE THE ENTIRE CHAIN OF COMMAND BEHIND IT) THE ORCHESTRATED, PLANNED VIOLENCE OF THE ARMED-TO-THE-TEETH DEFENDERS OF THE GLOBAL ELITE AGAINST THE ALL-TOO-VISIBLE POLITICAL MANIFESTATIONS OF POPULAR, INTERNATIONAL REJECTION OF THE AGENDAS OF THE INSTITUTIONS PERCEIVED AS IMPOSING POLICIES AND PRACTICES WHICH, RATHER THAN ALLEVIATING THE PROBLEMS THEY CLAIM TO BE CONFRONTING (HUNGER-FAMINE - ON AN UNIMAGINABLE SCALE; DISLOCATIONS OF ENTIRE POPULATIONS; MARGINALIZATIONS OF WHOLE SECTORS (CLASS STRATA, NATIONS, PEOPLES, ETHNIC GROUPS), POVERTY OF A DEGREE AND SCALE WHICH HAS BEEN -AND CONTINUES TO BE (FOR MOST PEOPLE) UNTHINKABLE; RAMPANT EPIDEMICS OF FATAL DISEASE; MASSIVE ENVIRONMENTAL DESPOLIATION IN THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF THE WORLD, AND INCREASING ATTACKS EVEN ON THE SOCIAL & ECONOMIC GAINS OF MOST PEOPLE IN THE SO-CALLED DEVELOPED WORLD WITH ITS WELFARE STATE PROTECTIONS AND PUBLIC SECTORS BEING SCRAPPED AND SHREDDED, INCLUDING IN THE SELF-PROCLAIMED ECONOMIC 'SUPER-POWERS') ARE MERELY INTERESTED IN CREATING A STABILIZED GLOBAL REGIME IN WHICH THE ATTEMPTED GLOBALIZED MONOPOLIZATION OF EFFECTIVE WEALTH AND POWER IN THE HANDS OF ACTORS NOT RESPONSIBLE TO ANY DEMOCRATIC CONTROL IS IMPOSED, WHILE CONTAINING THE DISRUPTIONS CREATED BY THE INEVITABLE RESISTANCE OF THE MASSES OF PEOPLE AFFECTED BY POLICIES OVER WHICH THEY HAVE NO CONTROL.

WE PROTEST, VEHEMENTLY, THE MURDER OF AN ANTI-CORPORATE PROTESTOR IN GENOA, SHOT AND RUTHLESSLY RUN-OVER BY A MILITARY VEHICLE, AND ALSO THE GROWING NUMBER OF THOSE PROTESTORS BEING BEATEN, GASSED, SHOT AT, TRAMPLED, JAILED AND SUBJECTED TO BOTH PERSONAL BRUTALITY AND HIGH-TECH CROWD CONTROL TECHNIQUES FOR THE PURPOSES OF DISCOURAGING THEIR PROTESTS - AND ALL SUCH PROTESTS - AND PREVENTING THEM FROM HAVING ANY IMPACT ON THOSE WORLD "LEADERS" WHO ARE PRESENTLY MEETING IN A FORTIFIED COMPOUND IN THE FREE CITY OF GENOA.

WE CALL ON THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC ELITE MEETING IN GENOA - AND READY TO MEET IN FURTHER FORTIFIED LOCATIONS OVER THE NEXT MONTHS AS THEY HAVE SINCE THE WTO DEBACLE IN SEATTLE - TO ABANDON THE ENTIRE ANTI-DEMOCRATIC FRAMEWORK OF THEIR DELIBERATIONS, TO DROP THE ANTI-POPULAR PROGRAMS AND POLICIES WHICH THEY ARE PURSUING AND TO ENTER INTO FREE, OPEN DIALOGUE, TRANSPARENT AND UNIMPEDED, WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF CIVIL SOCIETY AND OF ORGANIZED MASS-DEMOCRATIC FORCES AND MOVEMENTS.

LET THIS MURDER IN GENOA NOT BE IN VAIN! THE ESCALATION OF THIS CONFRONTATION WITH POPULAR INTERESTS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NEEDS OF THE ORDINARY PEOPLE OF THE WORLD SHOULD COME TO A HALT HERE AND NOW.

THE CYNICISM OF BUSH WHO TELLS THE WORLD THAT THE PROTESTS ONLY HURT THE CAUSE OF "THE POOR" (AS IF "THE POOR" WERE SOME CATEGORY OF HUMANS APART FROM HIS OWN SPECIES) MUST BE REJECTED WITH THE CONTEMPT IT DESERVES.

WE CALL ON OUR FELLOW PROFESSIONALS AND WORKERS, EDUCATORS, CULTURAL ACTIVISTS, ALL THOSE ENGAGED IN THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL SERVICE SECTOR, TO REJECT PRIVATIZATION, THE DESTRUCTION OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR WHERE IT EXISTS AND ITS DISCOURAGEMENT WHERE IT HAS YET TO BE SIGNIFICANTLY DEVELOPED, THE SUBSTITUTION OF ANTI-DEMOCRATIC SUPRA-NATIONAL DECISION-MAKING OF SECRET BODIES REPRESENTING ELITE INTERESTS FOR EXISTING DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES HOWEVER WEAK.

PROGRESSIVE LIBRARIANS AND INFORMATION WORKERS SAY NO TO CORPORATE GLOBALIZATION; NO TO MURDEROUS VIOLENCE AGAINST LEGITIMATE MILITANT, MASS ANTI-GLOBALIZATION PROTEST; NO TO THE EROSION OF DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS; NO TO THE CRUSHING OF THE CLAIMS OF NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY AND THE EQUAL RIGHTS OF MINORITIES; NO TO THE CREATION OF A NEW ECONOMIC ORDER BASED ON THE BURDENING OF THE POOR NATIONS WITH INCREASING DEBT!

MARK ROSENZWEIG

CO-EDITOR, PROGRESSIVE LIBRARIAN

JULY 21ST 2001

**IF YOU WISH TO ADD YOUR NAME TO THIS STATEMENT,
THEN YOU CAN DO SO UPON**

<http://libr.org/PLG/Genoa.html>

CLASSIC AND NEO-INFORMATION (EDITORIAL) *

YOU'VE UNDOUBTEDLY NOTICED THAT THE PACE OF CULTURAL CHANGE HAS GIVEN RISE TO NEW USES TO THE WORD "CLASSIC": CLASSIC ROCK, CLASSIC COKE, CLASSIC CARS. WHEN NEW THINGS REPLACE OLD THINGS, THE NEW THINGS USUALLY LACK SOMETHING THAT WE DIDN'T APPRECIATE BEFORE IT WAS MISSING. WHAT IS MISSING FROM THE NEW THEN GIVES A NEW VALUE TO THE OLD THING THAT CAN BE INDICATED WITH THE WORD "CLASSIC." (THE WORD "RETRO," BY CONTRAST, IS TRIVIALIZING.) I THINK THAT THIS IS SOMETIMES MORE THAN SIMPLE NOSTALGIA; IT IS PART OF HOW OUR CULTURE IS DEALING WITH THE FACT THAT CHANGE, OR EVEN WHAT IS COMMONLY THOUGHT OF AS "PROGRESS," IS NOT EXACTLY THE SAME THING AS IMPROVEMENT. (THIS IS TRUE EVEN IF YOU DON'T PREFER CLASSIC ROCK).

THIS EDITORIAL IS CONCERNED WITH THE WAY A NEW CONCEPT OF INFORMATION, WHICH I WILL CALL NEO-INFORMATION, HAS REPLACED THE OLD, WHICH I WILL CALL CLASSIC INFORMATION. UNDERSTANDING THIS CONCEPTUAL CHANGE IS ESSENTIAL FOR UNDERSTANDING THE "INFORMATION AGE." IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT IN THINKING ABOUT THE ROLE OF LIBRARIES IN AN "INFORMATION SOCIETY."

(THE IDEA I AM SKETCHING OUT HERE NEEDS TO BE WORKED OUT FURTHER AT A LATER DATE. IF YOU WANT TO HELP ME THINK ABOUT IT, PLEASE CONTACT ME AT RORY@LIBR.ORG .)

CLASSIC INFORMATION IS KNOWLEDGE ABOUT FACTS OR EVENTS OR THE COMMUNICATION OF THAT KNOWLEDGE. LIBRARIES PROVIDE CLASSIC INFORMATION IN THE SENSE THAT THEY PROVIDE ACCESS TO REFERENCE MATERIALS AND THE FACTS CONTAINED THEREIN. CLASSIC INFORMATION, IS, IN A SENSE, THAT WHICH IS "ABOUT" REALITY. LONG BEFORE THE INFORMATION AGE, LIBRARIES PROVIDED THE CLASSIC INFORMATION THAT IS CONTAINED IN ALMANACS, DIRECTORIES, DICTIONARIES, ETC. LIBRARIES ALSO PROVIDED ACCESS TO LITERATURE, BUT LITERATURE WAS NOT INFORMATION OR SOMETHING THAT INFORMATION COULD CONTAIN; IT WAS A DIFFERENT CATEGORY. CLASSIC INFORMATION IS A MUCH MORE LIMITED CONCEPT THAN NEO-INFORMATION.

WHAT I CALL NEO-INFORMATION IS THE CONCEPT OF INFORMATION CREATED BY SHANNON AND WEAVER, AND IS THE ACCIDENTAL DEVELOPMENT THAT, IN MY OPINION, GIVES THEIR WORK ITS SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE. SHANNON AND WEAVER CREATED A SPECIAL DEFINITION OF INFORMATION FOR USE IN THEIR THEORY - IT BECAME THAT WHICH COULD BE CARRIED BY A SIGNAL IN THE PROCESS OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION. ELECTRONIC SIGNALS NOW PRIMARILY CARRY IMAGES AND SOUNDS; THUS, IMAGES AND SOUNDS ARE NOW ALSO INFORMATION (NEO-INFORMATION).

NEO-INFORMATION IS ALSO "THAT WHICH IS ABOUT REALITY", BUT IN A NEW WAY: IN THE SENSE THAT IT IS FORM ABSTRACTED FROM SUBSTANCE OR THAT WHICH GIVES ORDER AND PATTERN TO PHYSICAL MATTER. THUS, YOUR DNA CONTAINS THE INFORMATION THAT GIVES ORDER TO THE PROTEIN MOLECULES THAT MAKE UP YOUR BODY. THE TV SIGNAL CONTAINS THE INFORMATION THAT GIVES ORDER TO THE ELECTRONS THAT HIT THE PHOSPHORESCENT SCREEN. THERE ARE MACHINES, USED BY ENGINEERS TO CREATE MODELS, THAT TAKE THREE-DIMENSIONAL MAPS OR DESIGNS CREATED ON COMPUTERS AND TURN THEM INTO THREE-DIMENSIONAL OBJECTS. AND, A TCP/IP STREAM MIGHT CONTAIN THE INFORMATION THAT MAKES UP SARTRE'S NAUSEA, THUS MAKING LITERATURE A SUBSET OF NEO-INFORMATION.

IN A SENSE, NEO-INFORMATION IS JUST OVERGROWN CLASSIC INFORMATION: NOTHING MORE THAN VERY EXTENSIVE KNOWLEDGE (WHETHER IN SOMEONE'S MIND OR ONLY IN A DEVICE) OF FACTS AND EVENTS - THE FACTS AND EVENTS THAT MAKE UP REALITY. BUT IN BECOMING SO UBIQUITOUS IT HAS BECOME SOMETHING NEW AS WELL. PERHAPS THE MAIN FEATURE OF THE CONTEMPORARY AGE IS THE WAY IN WHICH THE IMAGES AND INFORMATION WITH WHICH WE ARE SURROUNDED HAVE BECOME OUR REALITY. WHERE JEAN BAUDRILLARD SPEAKS OF SIMULACRA, HE COULD JUST AS EASILY SPEAK OF NEO-INFORMATION (OR THE MEDIATED WORLD WE CREATE THROUGH OUR USE OF NEO-INFORMATION). WHERE INFORMATION WAS ORIGINALLY "ABOUT" REALITY, IN THE AGE OF NEO-INFORMATION IT HAS BECOME THE SUBSTANCE OF "REALITY" ITSELF.

THIS CHARACTERISTIC OF NEO-INFORMATION IS WHAT REVEALS THE VALUE OF CLASSIC INFORMATION. WHERE NEO-INFORMATION CREATES A NEW REALITY THAT IS DEPENDENT UPON IT FOR EXISTENCE, CLASSIC INFORMATION IS DEPENDENT ON THE REAL WORLD WHICH IT IS "ABOUT" AND PRIVILEGES THAT REALITY. CLASSIC INFORMATION, THEREFORE, HAS THE POTENTIAL OF MAINTAINING OUR CONNECTION TO THE REAL WORLD AND AUTHENTIC EXISTENCE, WHILE NEO-INFORMATION OFFERS A CONNECTION TO ITSELF VIA IMAGES, AND PRIVILEGES ABSTRACTION.

TODAY, CLASSIC INFORMATION AND NEO-INFORMATION EXIST SIDE BY SIDE UNDER THE SAME NAME ("INFORMATION"), AND THAT IS THE SOURCE OF A PROBLEM, IN THAT NEO-INFORMATION BORROWS FROM THE MORAL AUTHORITY OF CLASSIC INFORMATION. CLASSIC INFORMATION IS RELATED TO TRUTH TELLING, INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM, CRITICAL REFLECTION AND SWORN TESTIMONY; THE PRACTICES WHICH BIND US TO REALITY AS A GROUP. THUS WE HAVE THE MORAL WEIGHT OF THE SAYING, "INFORMATION WANTS TO BE FREE" AND THE TRADITIONAL VALUES OF LIBRARIANSHIP (EQUITY OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION, INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM). BECAUSE IT FALLS UNDER THE SAME TITLE OF "INFORMATION," NEO-INFORMATION BORROWS FROM THE VALUE OF CLASSIC INFORMATION AND USES IT TO SUPPORT ITS OWN FORM OF NON-CONNECTION TO REALITY.

THIS IS EVIDENCED IN LEGAL PROTECTION FOR THE CRAPPIEST CORPORATE ENTERTAINMENT, COMMERCIAL BILLBOARDS, AND THE OTHER JUNK THAT MAKES UP OUR MENTAL ENVIRONMENT, AND THEIR PRESENCE IN LIBRARIES.

DRAWING A DISTINCTION BETWEEN CLASSIC INFORMATION AND NEO-INFORMATION IS IMPORTANT FOR THINKING ABOUT LIBRARY SERVICES IN THE INFORMATION AGE. IN AN AGE WHERE THE MAJORITY OF OUR EXPERIENCE THROUGHOUT THE DAY IS TAKEN UP BY "INFORMATION," HOW CAN WE BEGIN TO THINK ABOUT THE FUTURE OF AN INSTITUTION WE UNDERSTAND AS BEING BASED ON "INFORMATION PROVISION?" WITH INFORMATION SO UBIQUITOUS, HOW CAN WE HAVE ANY CLAIM TO BEING "INFORMATION PROFESSIONALS" ANY MORE THAN A GRAPHIC ARTIST WHO USES PHOTOSHOP OR A TELEVISION PRODUCER IS AN "INFORMATION PROFESSIONAL?"

THE ANSWER IS TO CONCEIVE OF INFORMATION AS IT RELATES TO LIBRARIES IN TERMS OF CLASSIC INFORMATION AND NOT NEO-INFORMATION.

SHANNON AND WEAVER HAVE BEEN NOTHING IF NOT A SOURCE OF CONFUSION FOR OUR PROFESSION.

RORY LITWIN

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NEXT ISSUE:**GLOBALISATION AND INFORMATION**

Coming soon, coming next - '*Globalisation and information*' - the next issue (December 2001) of '*Information for Social Change*'. Many important and urgent issues will be addressed. New Labour has made clear its intention to introduce a large programme of privatisation of the public services. If the programme goes ahead some unions have even threatened to withdraw their funds to Labour. However, New Labour is a servant (albeit a willing one) of a greater force at large - global capitalism. Governments the world over nurture capital's quest to dominate economic and social life. Capitalism is now a global, seemingly all-embracing, all-pervasive system, together with all its contradictions and irrationalities. As Richard Sanders says in 'GATS: the end of democracy' (Australian Financial Review, 15th June 2001)

We are witnessing the economic colonisation of the world by corporate interests... and... proposed changes being negotiated will lead inevitably to the demise of most public services including health and education.

Sanderson does not mention libraries and information services specifically, but this is a general problem that everyone in the library and information field is aware of. Libraries and information do not typically get the same coverage as other areas of social life, hence the importance of this issue. Clearly, libraries will follow down the same path; indeed, they are already starting to. Many organisations now charge for providing information in various ways.

Tragically, libraries and information are seen to be relatively unimportant - which is a real travesty. Information and knowledge is the key to understanding. If more people had access to this key, the globalisation agenda itself would not be rolling along as smoothly as it currently is. By default, the general public is largely fed the propaganda generated by big business and corporate interests - by the likes of Murdoch and Co. We are being sucked along into the global capital web - which will eventually cause misery and death to millions (in addition to those whose lives have already been blighted or terminated by capitalism), as the planet also continues to burn up.

All these changes are taking place through agreements that are being negotiated and signed by corporate interest, with the assistance of nation states, behind closed doors. The WTO and GATS are well-known agreements, but there are many other agreements as well. The Poverty Reduction and Growth Formula has special conditions, for example, attached to the assistance it receives from the IMF and the World Bank's Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiatives.

All these mind-blowing issues as well as others will be addressed in the next issue.

Ruth Rikowski, 24th June 2001, London